

# *Battle Local Action Plan*



*Working to  
Enhance the  
Quality of Life for  
all Battle  
Residents*



*Produced with grateful thanks  
for the support given by:*

*Action in Rural Sussex*

*Battle Partnership*

# *Battle Local Action Plan*

*Introduction by Councillors Paula Fisher and Ron Harris,  
Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor*

*We wrote to all Battle Residents a year ago with an invitation to contribute towards formulating a Local Action Plan for Battle. We asked for a rather lengthy questionnaire be completed and returned. It is just not possible to say how very deeply satisfying it was to receive back nearly 580 completed replies. What was even more gratifying was that so many of you took the time to add your own comments, suggestions and questions about our wonderful Town. There were nearly 1,100 such comments etc.*

*All the questionnaires were carefully read through. They were then passed to an agency for professional analysis. Next the written-in comments were all extracted and collated.*

*We wanted to ensure that as many interests as possible were reflected in the Plan. So, a Steering Group was formed consisting of representatives from many of the Town's Community Groups. The Steering Group examined the questionnaire analysis and suggested certain further actions. We then set up a drafting sub-committee tasked with pulling together all the data which we had amassed and turning it into a Plan of Action for the years ahead.*

*We are proud to put before you the resulting **Battle Local Action Plan**.*

*It is a rather long document. This is inevitable, as the Plan has to reflect all the research which has taken place. We urge you all to read it right through. But, if you simply want to know the outcome you might turn to Part 3 on Pages 15 to 17. Here you will find a list of the actions which will now be taken to try to meet the wishes of Battle residents.*

*Finally, you will see that we need help if we are to meet all your aspirations. If you think that you would like to help achieve any of the targets set in Part 3, do please contact either of us, or the Town Clerk or any of the other Town Councillors.*

*Paula Fisher  
Town Mayor*

*Ron Harris  
Deputy Town Mayor*

*April 2007*

# THE BATTLE TOWN LOCAL ACTION PLAN

## PART 1 – THE BACKGROUND

### 1.1. WHAT IS THE BATTLE LOCAL ACTION PLAN?

The Battle Local Action Plan (BLAP) is the end result of consulting with the people of Battle about the sort of local Community they want to see in the years ahead. It is seen as reflecting the concerns and aspirations of ALL of the Town's people. It is not a once and for all time Plan, but will be reviewed and updated annually for at least the next four years.

### 1.2. HOW HAVE THE PEOPLE OF BATTLE BEEN CONSULTED?

#### 1.2.1. The Battle Partnership Healthcheck

In 2001/2 the Battle Partnership carried out what was known as a "Healthcheck". The research conducted by the Partnership produced a body of information about Battle and the surrounding villages. However, some of the aspirations expressed in the Healthcheck survey remain to be fulfilled.

#### 1.2.2. Battle Local Area Transport Strategy

In 2004/5 ESCC held three open meetings in Battle to discuss transport issues in Battle and the surrounding area. That consultation produced, in June 2005, a document called the Battle Local Area Transport Strategy (BLATS). Seven main projects arising from BLATS were adopted for feasibility studies, to be carried out in 2006/7

#### 1.2.3. The Netherfield Compact

The Netherfield Compact was worked on in 2002/4. It is based on a wide ranging consultative exercise involving all residents in the Netherfield ward. A number of the main aspirations which emerged remain to be met.

#### 1.2.4. The 2006 Battle Town Council Questionnaire

In March 2006 Battle Town Council produced a questionnaire based upon matters raised by the three pre-2006 consultation exercises which were still outstanding. But other matters of concern to the people of Battle were also included in the survey. The questionnaires were sent to all 2,570 households in the Battle Town Council area. An impressive 579 completed questionnaire, representing the views of 764 residents, were returned. The completed questionnaires were professionally analysed according to the priority given to each question.

### **1.2.5. Battle Local Action Plan Steering Group**

A Steering Group consisting of representatives from sixteen local community organisations (see Appendix at page 18 for details) was set up to follow up on the

results of the public consultation questionnaire. This Action Plan, produced by the Battle Local Action Plan Steering Group, is the outcome of all the consultation which has taken place.

## **PART 2 - WHAT THE CONSULTATION PROCESS REVEALED**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

This Part of the BLAP looks more closely at resident's concerns, hopes, wishes and aspirations for Battle as revealed by the questionnaire responses. It takes account of further information, gathered since the 2006 questionnaire, in the course of discussions with groups of people with particular concerns and interests.

### **2.2. COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Under this heading the questionnaire listed a number of objectives which might help to promote better social cohesion and improve the quality of life for all people living in Battle.

What was said about the objectives, the actions needed to make things happen and possible further actions to be taken now, follow below:

#### **2.2.1. Objective - Enhance Community Sporting and Social Facilities**

**2.2.1.1 Work with Users of Sporting & Social Facilities.** The survey suggested that to achieve this aim it was necessary to work closely with schools, community groups, sports clubs and youth groups etc, in order to find out just what potential users wanted. Fifty eight percent of respondents saw such consultation as a high priority, whilst another 27% gave it a medium priority.

**2.2.1.2 Develop Recreation and Sports Grounds Facilities.** A total of 80% of replies gave the basic principle either a high or medium high priority. However, there was only medium or low support given to specific proposals relating to developing the recreation ground. More research seems to be needed in this area, not least in consultation with Battle's sports teams and youth organisations. In addition liaison with sporting interests at Claverham College seems to be important.

**Action on 2.2.1.1 & 2.2.1.2:**

Undertake further consultation. A Project Leader needs be found to set up a widely advertised Open Forum to enable those most likely to use sporting and social facilities to express their needs. This should be followed-up by the **BTC & BLAP Steering Group** in liaison with such as Battle Youth Club, the Baptist Church Youth Club, Battle football and cricket club, the scouting and guides movements, all Battle schools etc.

**Rother DC's Parks Development Officer** should be invited to participate in the Open Forum. See also the note on related proposed action under 2.2.6. for a possible Big Lottery Fund project.

(Note: Since work started on drafting this plan, **Rother District Council** has appointed PMP London, a specialist sports and leisure consultancy, to complete an open space, sports and recreational needs audit for the District. That consultation has now taken place. The outcome so far as Battle is concerned is not known.)

**2.2.1.3. Provide Car Parking at the Recreation Ground.**

An impressive 75% of survey replies gave either a high (42%) or medium (33%) priority rating to the suggestion that some off-road car parking be provided for recreation ground users.

**Action:** **Battle Town Council (BTC)** is preparing to seek planning permission for a car parking area. Build is expected in 2007/8. To be monitored.

**2.2.1.4. Provision of a Swimming Pool.**

Nearly 83% of respondents supported the idea of providing a heated, covered swimming pool. In more recent consultations with young people (see para. 2.2.6 below), provision of a new swimming was identified as a high priority with young people.

**Action:** The demand for an indoor heated swimming pool for Battle cannot be doubted. A **Community Champion** needs to be identified to progress the idea, develop a plan, identify sources of funding etc.

**2.2.2. Objective – Enhance Community Halls**

The questionnaire asked whether there should be a policy of constantly updating the Battle Memorial Hall and Netherfield Village Hall and whether a wider community use of these facilities should be encouraged. A majority of replies supported both propositions as a high priority, whilst overall 75% of replies saw the proposals as having a high or medium priority.

There is no adjacent car parking for Battle Memorial Hall. This together with restrictions on use, stemming from noise nuisance abatement requirements, were seen as drawbacks.

Some respondents advocated a new Community Hall for Battle as the answer to the those drawbacks. But because within the last 5 years in excess of £400,000 (half of that public money) has been spent on

refurbishing the Memorial Hall, it is unrealistic to expect a new hall in the short term.

Thus a new hall should be considered as a medium to longer term project.

**Action:** The concept of a new Town Centre Community Hall should remain in the current and any successor plan for the future of the Town. The need should be actively borne in mind by **BTC and Partners** and promoted at all appropriate opportunities.

The distance from the Town Centre and the lack of public transport links, mean that Netherfield needs its own Community Hall. A **Community Hall Champion** needs to be encouraged to emerge from Netherfield to develop the need identified in the Netherfield Compact for a hall better situated than the Village Hall.

### **2.2.3. Objective – Provide Community Drop-in and Day Care Facilities**

At Darvel Down a need for a drop-in centre for all age groups was established in the public consultations which led to the Netherfield Compact. That need remains unfulfilled.

There has been rather less work on researching the need for either a drop-in centre for all ages or a day care centre for seniors, in other parts of Battle.

**Action:** Further consultations are needed. Those consultations

should be set in motion jointly by the **BTC & BLAP Steering Group**. During the consultation **Project Leaders** need to be identified to progress action.

### **2.2.4. Objective – Healthcare Matters**

The questionnaire asked only broad brush questions about providing better access to, and improvements in, healthcare. It suggested that the way ahead lay in working with the PCT and Hospital Trusts, the Department of Social Service, Doctor's practices etc. More than half of respondents saw this as a high priority with 84% ranking the subject as high or medium priority.

**Action:** Obviously this is an area where people have concerns. But further consultation is needed to establish more clearly the exact nature of those concerns and what should be done to meet them. A **Healthcare Champion** needs to be found to coordinate research, in liaison with the PCTs, Doctor's Practices etc.

### **2.2.5 Objective – Provide more Affordable Housing**

There were mixed views expressed on affordable housing, with under two thirds of respondents giving high or medium priority to the proposed actions. However, it is clear from replies that the meaning of the term "affordable housing" is not well understood.

A number of those who replied took the opportunity to write-in comments on housing in general and the Blackfriars development in particular. The extent of the comments is enough to demonstrate a sense of unease about the way that the Town may be perceived to be developing.

**Action:** Most of the issues mentioned are decided at a higher level than the Town Council. But there is clearly a demand for more to be done to press the interests of Town residents, both on affordable housing and on housing issues in general. There also seems to be a need to explain more clearly what is meant by affordable housing. BTC should also encourage more residents to take a closer interest in the work of the BTC Planning Committee.

Rother District Council and AirS officers could help with information on affordable housing, while BTC might examine whether there are means of making the public more aware of its activities.

### **2.2.6 Objective – Improve facilities for young people**

There were four questions posed about the actions which might be taken to improve facilities for young people in Battle. Nearly one third of the 764 opinions recorded, expressed no particular view on those proposals. Paradoxically there were far more written-in remarks (50) on improving facilities for young

people, than on any other objective under the Community Support heading.

Since work started on this plan further consultation has been carried out by a representative of the Youth Development Service (YDS). This established aspirations by young people for the provision of:

- a. Extension of the existing skate ramp in Battle.
- b. New skate ramps at the recreation ground and in Netherfield
- c. Youth shelters at both Netherfield and in Battle

In addition young people expressed a strong desire for a covered heated swimming pool. However, they said that this would be best not located at Claverham as there was an aversion by many young people to use school related facilities after school.

The need for a youth café, which had been expressed in comments on the questionnaire, has also been identified by the YDS representative. Funds have now been provided for a kitchen at the youth centre. This could form a basis for other projects - for a youth café or an internet café - identified in the BTC survey.

**Action:** Further on-going consultation is needed. The open forum consultations, suggested under the Recreational and Sporting activities heading above, might be extended to also cover young people's needs

more generally. Otherwise, separate forums could be arranged. **Project leaders** will need to be identified for any projects which are undertaken.

### **2.2.7 Objective – Ensure that public toilets are retained in Battle**

This subject was included in the questionnaire because at the time that it was being drafted Rother District Council proposed closing all public toilets in Battle. That issue has now been mainly resolved. However, the public toilets adjacent to Battle Abbey have been lost as part of the Abbey Visitor Centre development.

**Action:** BTC should include the need for new public facilities

at the Abbey Green end of Town on its agenda for future action.

### **2.2.8. Other Matters**

There were also 17 different written-in suggestions added to the Community Support part of the questionnaire. Most proposals have some merit, but it would not be practical for all to be taken up. However, the suggestion that there should be organised (escorted) health walks for seniors on flat even routes surrounding Battle would doubtless be supported by the PCT.

**Action:** The PCT, AirS and Age Concern should take on the idea, working with Battle Ramblers representatives – who may well be prepared to help to arrange a roster of escorts.

## **2.3. THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **OBJECTIVES**

This part of the questionnaire set out some objectives which might be pursued to improve the living environment for Battle residents and some Actions which might help attain those objectives.

What was said about the objectives, the actions needed to make things happen and possible further actions to be taken now, follow below:

#### **2.3.1. Objective - Reduce Petty Crime and Improve the Perception of Safety in Battle**

**2.3.1.1. Police presence in Battle.** Pressing for a more regular Police/Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) presence in Battle received the largest number of High priority votes in the whole of

the questionnaire. As well as the 631 people (83% of all respondents) who thought that seeing a policeman or a PCSO regularly and being able to perceive that Battle was safe should have the highest priority, a further 99 people (13%) made the subject a medium priority. There is also a case for PCSOs to hold

regular surgeries for Battle residents.

**Action:** BTC to continually monitor the situation and:

- a. Take every opportunity to press for a greater police presence in Town,
- b. Lobby at the Rother Police Liaison Committee meetings for local police to be regularly seen on foot,
- c. Seek to involve non-Councillor representation at those liaison meetings.
- d. Arrange for PCSOs to hold regular surgeries in Battle to seek local views and report back their findings to BTC.

**2.3.1.2. Seek Continuity in Police Staffing.** Retaining the same police personnel on a continuous basis was awarded High or Medium priority by 91% of those who completed the questionnaire.

**Action:** BTC and Battle's representatives on the Police Liaison Committee to continue to monitor the situation and to take such prompt follow-up action as may become necessary from time to time.

**2.3.1.3. Other Measures to Reduce Petty Crime.** The survey suggested that extending CCTV coverage in Town and supporting the work of the Safer Rother Partnership were also actions to needed to improve safety. Both measures were given High or Medium priority by around three quarters of respondents.

**Action:** The Town's interest should be better promoted with

the Safer Rother Partnership by **Battle's District Councillors, BTC and representatives on the Police Liaison Committee.**

As money for CCTV is still ring fenced in Battle Partnership's funds, a plan needs to be formulated to spend the money. **BTC** should lead on this.

**2.3.1.4. Other Crime & Safety Concerns.** There were 50 written-in comments on the questionnaires under the Petty Crime & Safety heading. The main concern was the adequacy of the police coverage in Town.

**Action:** Concerns about the adequacy of policing coverage in Battle and at very least retaining the present level of coverage should continue to be pressed on the police at every opportunity. **BTC representatives** on the Rother Police Liaison Committee should be urged to be continually vigilant and oppose any move to cut back.

**BTC representatives** on the Rother Police Liaison Committee, **BTC** and the **Safer Rother Partnership** should all work to ensure that there are no reductions in funding for local day-to-day policing.

**2.3.2. Objective - Improve the Appearance of the Market Square and Encourage its Use.**

The responses given suggest that people would like to see better use made of the Square, with improved lighting and grounds maintenance etc. Installing cameras in the Market Square scored the most High and

Medium priority support of the five actions proposed for Market Square.

**Action:** As already noted, the provision of CCTV for the Square should be the main aim of efforts to improve the Town's CCTV coverage. **BTC** are leading on this, and are promoting an appropriate scheme. CCTV should be backed up by improved lighting.

**Beautiful Battle** is now working, with some support from Budgens, on improving grounds maintenance. Further action could await the results of this effort.

### **2.3.3 Objective – Improve Recycling of Waste**

Over 50% of replies gave a High priority to enlarging the range of kerbside collections. One particularly, seemingly intractable problem, was said to be recycling cardboard. The Mountfield Recycling Depot is reportedly the only facility accepting cardboard.

Nearly 40% of replies to the survey gave the provision of a recycling facility at the southern end of Town a High priority.

**Action:** Although there is a demand for an additional recycling centre to serve the south of the Town, it may be wise to wait to see the effect of the increased range of kerbside collections before following up on identifying a new recycling site.

### **2.3.4 Objective – Improve the Town's Footways and Pavements**

The first aim concerned developing the existing footways from Chequers Corner via George Meadow and Battle & Langton School to Claverham College to make it suitable for use by all walkers. Action here is the responsibility of ESCC. Three quarters of all respondents gave a High or Medium priority to pressing ESCC to undertake the necessary improvements.

A slightly larger number gave the same level of priority to regular monitoring and reporting to ESCC needed maintenance of, and suggested improvements to, the footways and pavements to.

The third proposal was that there should be a well signed Town circular route without steps and other obstacles. This was less well supported, with around one third allocating it a High Priority and slightly less a Medium priority.

There were a number of comments about the unfriendliness of Battle's footways and pavements towards those physical disadvantaged.

**Action:** Improving the footway linking Chequers Corner to Battle & Langton has been identified by the Battle Local Area Transport Strategy (BLATS) as a short term measure for progression to a least the feasibility study stage in 2006/7. **BTC should press ESCC** for completion of the study; detailed

planning and then funding allocation - as a high priority. Many communities have **Disability Rights Champion**, unless somebody takes on that role in Battle, progress is likely to be slow. The **BTC and BLAP Steering Group** should liaise in considering this need.

### **2.3.5. Objective – Maintain Footpaths in Good Order**

Only 31% (albeit 234 people) gave the maintenance of footpaths in good order a high priority.

**Action:** The **PCT** should be invited to review whether their efforts to encourage walking in Battle are being as effective as possible. They could liaise with **Battle Ramblers** on this.

**BTC** could contribute to that effort and also help to make Battle friendlier towards visitors by arranging for a large scale map showing all the footpaths in Battle at a Town centre site. **PCT** health education funds might be available to help with cost.

### **2.3.6. Objective – Provide a Better Footpath Network in the Netherfield Area**

14% expressed no view on the subject - the second highest no view vote of the 16 Actions proposed in this section of the

questionnaire. Since the question asked in the survey was somewhat vague, the way ahead on Netherfield footpaths might well be to invite representatives of the Netherfield community to identify more precise needs in association with local land owners and rambler's groups.

**Action:** Invite **Darvel Down Residents Association** to work on identifying more precise needs in liaison with **Battle Ramblers**. The outcome could be processed initially through the **BTC Estates Committee**.

b. **BTC** might wish to provide an additional notice board footpath map, centred on Darvel Down, for Netherfield residents and visitors benefit. Again **PCT** funds from their health education budget might be able to help.

### **2.3.7. Other Environmental Issues**

There were 15 written-in comments on other subjects. Half of those related to one or another aspect of the dog fouling issue.

**Action:** There seems to be a need to take up the dog fouling issue. A **project leader** needs to be identified to survey, perhaps in liaison with Rambler's groups, where bins are needed and to research possible avenues for funding same.

**-ooOoo-**

## 2.4. TRANSPORT

Every one of the 23 actions proposed under this heading in the survey was rated as being a high priority by a majority of respondents. Furthermore there were 510 written-in comments on Transport issues – just short of half the total of 1,097 comments on the whole of the survey.

What was said about the objectives, the actions needed to make things happen and possible further actions to be taken now, follow below:

### 2.4.1 Objective – Improve Traffic Management in the Town Centre

**2.4.1.1. Press for Action by Police/Traffic Warden.** Action to assist in aiding the flow of traffic through the High Street was rated a high priority by nearly two thirds of respondents.

**2.4.1.2. Seek a Time-Limiting Ban on HGVs in the High Street.** Again two thirds of replies gave this a high priority.

**2.4.1.3. Control of Pedestrian Road Crossing.** Views were invited on the suggestion for a new mid-High Street crossing. This received low support with only one third rating it as a high priority. The other proposal was to create a Pelican crossing to replace the Post Office Zebra crossing. Support was not strong. It was given a high or medium priority by only 64% of respondents.

There were various other written-in suggestions for pedestrian crossings at other locations through Town (including North Trade Road, where one has since been provided). However, there was no great demand for a new crossing at any other particular location.

### 2.4.1.4. Discourage Traffic from using the High Street.

Two popular proposals are to move the A21 public weighbridge from south of John's Cross to north thereof and to erect a sign before John's Cross advising of the unsuitability of Battle High Street for HGVs heading for Hastings industrial estates. There has been no weighbridge near John's Cross for a good many years now and ESCC report that the advisory sign exists.

**2.4.1.5. Other Suggestions to Improve Battle's Traffic Management.** A number of write-in comments on the questionnaire suggested that there should be a ban on deliveries to High Street shops during the main part of the day.

**Action:** Continuing to press the police and traffic wardens to better enforce the double yellow line parking restrictions in the High Street came high on the priority list for 80% of the residents that completed questionnaires. As ESCC and the police are the responsible authorities, there may be little which BTC can do directly to achieve the ends sought.

Other problems highlighted are diverse. Some communities with burning transport problems have formed Action Groups to campaign for their cause. It may be that this is what is needed for Battle. A **Project Leader** needs to emerge from the Community to coordinate a campaign and ensure that pressure is applied at the right level.

#### 2.4.2. Calm Battle's Traffic

There were five Actions proposed to help calm traffic in Battle. The first four actions related mainly to speed control other than by physical means (e.g. build-outs). All four were given high or medium priority by more than 75% of survey completers. In contrast, road engineering measures, such as build-outs etc, were only supported by 54% voting high or medium priority.

Strongest support was offered to the work of the Battle Road Safety Group, with nearly 50% allocating that their highest priority. However, some write-in comments suggested that the Group's activities are not as well known about as is merited.

**Action:** Strong support was given to pressing for enforcement of speed limits. This should be followed-up by **BTC** in liaison with the **Battle Road Safety Group**.

**Battle Road Safety Group** could probably benefit from a higher profile.

#### 2.4.3. Objective – Develop a Cycle Path Network.

82% of respondents gave the subject high or medium priority. One specific idea, perhaps worth further study, is for a Cuckoo Trail type cycle path based on Claverham, extending to Glyne Gap in one direction and via Battle Great Wood to the Brede Valley in the other.

**Action:** Work is needed to produce a Statement of Needs with specific proposals. Action should be led by the cycling lobby, perhaps in liaison with the Road Safety Group. A **Cycling Champion** needs to be sought. Precise proposals could be progressed to ESCC through BTC.

#### 2.4.4. Objective - Encourage More Young People to Walk/Cycle to School

Developing walking buses and establishing a cycle path along the George Meadow to Claverham footpaths were well supported. However, there were some written-in reservations about the cycle path.

Walking buses are strongly supported by ESCC and Battle & Langton School but there is a serious problem in identifying suitable assembly/drop-off point.

**Action:** The schools should be given every encouragement by **BTC** to continue to develop both ideas, in liaison with **ESCC** when appropriate.

#### **2.4.5. Objective – Increase Awareness of Public Transport Services and Improve Services to the Conquest Hospital**

Over 80% of replies gave high or medium priority to the need for more publicity to routes and timetables. Write-ins called for timetables at all bus stops and for bus company website timetables to be kept up to date. Another suggestion was that those eligible for Rother free travel passes should be encouraged to apply for same. 76% made this a high/medium priority.

Other action proposals concerned travel to the Conquest Hospital. Fortunately a reasonably good bus service has recently been established to the Conquest. However, introduction of the service exemplified the need for better publicity for available services.

Separate consultation with young people in Netherfield had established a pressing need to provide public transport links between that area and the centre of Battle.

**Action:** The need for more publicity about available services is clear. **Action in rural Sussex**, supported by **ESCC and Rother DC** could perform a campaigning role.

**BTC and Darvel Down Residents Association** to work together to

press ESCC etc to improve public transport links between Netherfield and Battle, not least for young people.

#### **2.4.6. Objective – Tackle Battle's Parking Problems**

This subject emerged from the survey as the most contentious issue affecting the quality of life of people in Battle. There were 239 written-in comments on parking, with yet more, under other headings, about problems which flow from the shortage of parking spaces. Many were contradictory, for example some pressed for stricter enforcement of existing yellow line restrictions, and some were against. There were more calls than on any other subject (around one hundred) to stop parking in various specific locations.

The lack of sufficient free parking (either on or off road) for Battle's residents also rankles with many. However a thorough analysis of all the comments contained in the questionnaire is well beyond the scope of this document.

**Action:** There seems to be a need for a Leader to set up a Project group to study the Town's long term parking issues; to give full weight to the survey's outcome and to take an in-depth and creative look at the way ahead. **BTC & BLAP Steering Group** should take the lead in setting up such a group.

## 2.5. ECONOMIC FACTORS

In the questionnaire, Battle resident's views were invited on eleven issues related to the Battle economy. Relatively low priority was given to the general economic questions. In contrast the issues relating to the Town's appearance were given a much higher priority.

What was said about the objectives, the actions needed to make things happen and possible further actions to be taken now, follow below:

### 2.5.1. Objective – Promote Local Business Development/Employment Opportunities

A sixth of all respondents expressed no view on the three Actions proposed to encourage local business development, whilst under one third saw the actions as meriting high priority. Written-in comments under this heading were generally well thought out. There were ten such comments. This was perhaps an insufficient number from which to draw to any general conclusions.

**Action:** Now that the Market Towns initiative has mainly run its course, there seems to be a case for **BTC**, the **Chamber of Commerce** and the **Battle Partnership** to work together, in liaison with the **Rother D.C. regeneration officers**, to ensure that no opportunity to promote the economy of the Battle area is missed.

### 2.5.2. Objective – Improve the Town's Appearance

The replies on the five actions suggested to improve the Town's appearance, for the benefit of both visitors and residents, demonstrated a marked degree of interest. At least two thirds of replies gave the proposed actions a high or medium priority. Furthermore there were 65 write-in suggestions or comments on this objective.

Nearly 80% of replies offered good support to the work being done by both

Beautiful Battle and the Town Council in their efforts to obtain recognition in the various "In Bloom" award projects.

**Action:** All those involved in **Beautiful Battle** and **BTC's** effort to improve the presentation of the Town should be encouraged to keep up their good work.

In the absence of a Conservation Society, the **BTC** Street Furniture Committee should be urged to be more pro-active in monitoring and seeking to improve all aspects of the street scene

### 2.5.3. Objective – Encourage Developing the Town as a Visitor Destination

There were some criticisms in the write-in comments, of which there were 48, about various aspects of the tourism business. They were broadly supportive of the need to promote tourism, but with some noting one of the downsides – the traffic/parking difficulties that come with the Town being a favoured visitor destination. English Heritage (EH) came in for some criticism, with some feeling that EH does not make sufficient contribution to the Town and a few critical of the location and activities of the EH run Tourist Information Office.

**Action:** Points of detail raised by respondents to the survey are worthy of revisiting by the **Chamber of Commerce** and **English Heritage**, with **BTC** contributing as appropriate.

## **2.6. BATTLE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **What Was Said about the Town Council and Possible Follow-up Action to be Taken**

This part of the questionnaire was designed essentially to set people thinking about what they knew of the functions of the Town Council. The answers given suggest that perhaps neither the Council nor its responsibilities are as well understood as Councillors might like to think. About two thirds of respondents said they knew the names of some Councillors. Rather less knew the Town Clerk's name. Less than half knew how to contact the Town Clerk by E-Mail.

The survey asked whether people thought the Town Council was responsible for six specific functions – maintenance of bus shelters, street lighting, etc. About two thirds gave the correct responses.

When asked whether residents thought the Town Council would value the responses given to the questions and whether the Council would act upon the results, a good majority were supportive in their answers.

**Action:** **Battle Town Council** may wish to review whether sufficient effort is put into communicating with Battle Residents through the various avenues available.

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**PART 3 –SUMMARY OF ACTIONS PROPOSED TO ACHIEVE THE ASPIRATIONS OF BATTLE’S RESIDENTS**

**3.1. FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY BATTLE TOWN COUNCIL**

<b>Priority For Action By BTC</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>	<b>Combined High/Medium Priority Rating in Town Questionnaire</b>	<b>Paragraph Number in Plan for Cross Reference</b>	<b>Help Needed With Funding?</b>	<b>Target Year for Completion</b>
1	Press, through Rother Police Liaison Committee meetings etc for a more visible policing of the Town & for PCSO Surgeries for residents to express local views.	95%	2.3.1	No	Continuous
2	Monitor retention of posts and continuity in local police staffing.	91%	2.3.1	No	Continuous
3	Promote provision of public toilet facilities in the Abbey Green area	91%	2.2.7	No	Continuous
4	Promote CCTV coverage and better lighting in Market Square	79%	2.3.2	Yes – Battle Partnership	2007/8
5	To be more pro-active in protecting and improving the Town’s street scene.	78%	2.5.2	No	Continuous
6	Promote, in the medium term, the need for a replacement Town Centre Community Hall.	76%	2.2.2	Yes, but not in the short term	Long term
7	Provide car parking for North Trade Road Recreation ground	75%	2.2.1.3	No	2007/8
8	Press ESCC to improve the Chequers Corner to Battle & Langton footway/footpath route	75%	2.3.4	No	2007/8
9	Promote (in Liaison with Rother District Councillors) the Town’s interest with the Safer Rother Partnership.	73%	2.3.1	No	Continuous
10	Better publicise its work on planning and housing issues.	62%	2.2.5	No	Continuous
11	Continuously review whether sufficient effort goes into communicating with Battle Residents about its work.	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.6.	No	Continuous

**3.2. PROJECT LEADERS/CHAMPIONS TO BE IDENTIFIED BY BATTLE TOWN COUNCIL IN LIAISON WITH BLAP STEERING GROUP MEMBERS**

<b>Priority For Joint Action</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>	<b>Combined High/Medium Priority Rating in Town Questionnaire</b>	<b>Paragraph Number in Plan for Cross Reference</b>	<b>Help Needed With Funding?</b>	<b>Target Year for Completion</b>
1	Identify a Project Leader to lead a co-ordinated campaign to address the many issues related to traffic management in the Town centre	91%	2.4.1	No	2007/8
2	Identify a Project Leader to arrange further consultation on recreation and sports grounds facilities.	85%	2.2.1.1 & 2.2.1.2	No	2007/8
3	Identify a Project Leader to arrange on-going consultation about young people's needs and to identify others to lead resulting projects.	85% & 62%	2.2.1 & 2.2.6	No	2007/8
4	Identify a Healthcare Champion to more clearly identify peoples concerns on healthcare	84%	2.2.4	No	2007/8
5	Identify a Project Leader to arrange further consultation on drop-in centres for both Battle and Netherfield and a Town day-care centre.	84%	2.2.3	No	2007/8
6	Identify a Swimming Champion to develop a project for a heated indoor Swimming Pool	82%	2.2.1.4	Yes, but not in the short term	2007/8
7	Identify a Cycling Champion to produce a Statement of Needs for cycle paths.	82%	2.4.3	No	2007/8
8	Identify a Project Leader to establish an Action Group to work on the Town's parking problems	80%	2.4.6	No	2007/8
9	Identify a Project Leader to develop a project for a Netherfield Community Hall.	76%	2.2.2	No	2007/8
10	Identify a Disability Rights Champion to press for footway/footpath to be improved for the disabled	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.3.4	No	2007/8
11	Identify a Project Leader to work in liaison with ramblers' groups on the dog mess bins issue.	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.3.7	No	2007/8

### 3.3. FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO BE SPONSORED BY BATTLE TOWN COUNCIL IN LIAISON WITH OTHER BODIES

Priority For Joint Action	Action to be Taken	Combined High/Medium Priority Rating in Town Questionnaire	Paragraph Number in Plan for Cross Reference	Partner body for Action	Target Year for Completion
1	Encourage more children to cycle/walk to school.	81%	2.4.4	Battle Schools	Continuous
2	Continue to press for the enforcement of speed limits.	80%	2.4.2	Battle Road Safety Group	Continuous
3	Campaign for better publicity of all public transport services.	80%	2.4.5	AirS, * ESCC, Rother D.C	Continuous
4	Lend support to the efforts of Beautiful Battle and Battle Town Council to improve the Town's appearance	78%	2.5.2	Beautiful Battle	Continuous
5	Provided a centrally located large scale footpath map of the area.	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.3.5	Battle Ramblers & the PCT*	2007/8
6	Provided a large scale footpath map of the Netherfield area.	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.3.6	Battle Ramblers, the PCT & DDARA*	2007/8
7	Review various points of detail, raised by respondents to the survey, related to tourism	73%	2.5.3	Chamber of Commerce & English Heritage	2007/8
8	Work, in liaison with Rother DC regeneration officers, to ensure that no opportunity to promote the economy of the Battle area is missed.	70%	2.5.1	Chamber of Commerce & Battle Partnership	Continuous
8	Identify more precisely the need for better footpaths for the Netherfield area.	65%	2.3.6	Battle Ramblers & DDARA	2007/8
9	Arrange organised escorted walks in the Town area for seniors	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.2.8	The PCT, AirS, Age Concern, RVA* & Battle Ramblers	2007/8
10	Press for improved public transport links between Netherfield & Battle particularly for young people,	n/a – source is written-in comments	2.4.5	DDARA & ESCC	Continuous

\* **PCT** = Primary Care Trust; **DDARA** = Darvel Down Residents Association; **AirS** = Action in rural Sussex; **RVA** = Rother Voluntary Action

**Appendix  
to the Battle Local Action Plan**

**List Of Organisations Invited to be Represented on the BLAP  
Steering Group**

Battle Abbey School  
Battle Branch Age Concern  
Battle Area Community Transport  
Battle Area Road Safety Group  
Battle Chamber of Commerce  
Battle Churches  
Battle Fire Service  
Battle Girl Guides  
Battle Partnership  
Battle Town Council  
Battle Youth Development Service  
Claverham Community College  
Darvel Down Residents Association  
Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust  
Rother Homes  
Rother Voluntary Action  
Saxonwood W.I.  
Sussex Police